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full-time priest.

"In the old days, two maids and a gardener were employed to tend the vicarage. I am not prepared to go on seeing my wife trying to do the work of mistress of the house, mother and two maids, and, as a reward, suffer the privations of grinding poverty."

Two sentenced for stripping lead - 1952

SWEEPINGS of lead carbonate oxide taken from the back of a car and compared by Scotland Yard experts with similar material found outside St Peter's church, Duxford, featured when two men were sent to prison for two years for stealing 360 lbs of lead valued at £22.10s. from the church.

The rector said he had become aware of a different light from the porch. He rushed up a ladder standing nearby and found that half the lead over the porch was missing.

The prosecution agreed not to proceed with a further charge of stealing lead from Ickleford church four days earlier.

A roof, a rocket, and a bow and arrow - 1952

HOW to put an aerial above your roof in three not-so-easy stages: 1: Call the fire brigade; 2: Ask the chief fire officer (Mr Tom Knowles) to fire a rocket attached to a rope over a TV aerial crossbar; 3: Use a bow and arrow.

All three methods were used in Cambridge by Mr John Peak of the King Street TV and furniture dealers.

He wanted to bracket a VHF aerial to the firm's existing aerial in connection with their TV night service.

But the fire brigade's turntable ladder was a foot short and the rocket missed its mark.

Then, an arrow from the bow



St Peter's Church in Duxford



Airmen with parachutes in 1932

of John Ridgeon (leader of the Cambridge bowmen) went over the top. Attached to it was the rope with the new aerial which was then hauled up.

No Guildhall means no functions - 1938

THE demolition of parts of the old Guildhall has meant that several annual functions have lost their normal home. But a mayoral reception elsewhere than in the Guildhall must surely be unique in Cambridge history.

It is symbolic of the happy relations existing between the town and the university that the old schools should have been placed at the disposal of the councillors.

Cars containing guests pulled up on King's Parade and a lengthy walk under illuminated awnings led to the dome room.

The council room, east room, syndicate room and regent house were in use but only the dais where the orchestra played for dancing was decorated

Professor with fear of women married - 1937



Paul Dirac (Bettman/Getty)

DR Paul Dirac was appointed as-old Lucasian Professor of Mathematics at Cambridge University in 1932, a few days before his 30th birthday, becoming the youngest occupant of this famous chair which was once occupied by Isaac Newton, and remains the youngest professor in Cambridge.

He has a reputation for being of a particularly shy and retiring disposition. A London newspaper stated: "More than publicity, he fears women. He has no interest in them and, even after being introduced to them, cannot remember whether they are pretty or plain."

He has now wed in London. The marriage was unexpected in Cambridge and even his colleagues at St John's College were unaware of the ceremony.

Little Ouse breaks its banks - 1928

A BREAK 35 yards long in the bank of the Little Ouse River, two miles below Wilton Bridge near Lakenheath, occurred shortly after midnight.

The Ouse Drainage Board engineers are on the spot with boats laden with gault and a gang of men is working hard to stop the leak.

The floods are still rising in the Fen district. The situation is serious but no further breaks are reported. The banks are being carefully watched and weak spots have been strengthened and it is hoped they will hold out.

Erecting sugar beet factory - 1925

ONE of the six new sugar beet factories is now in course of erection at Ely.

It will be the fourth beet sugar factory in the country with a capacity of 1,200 tons per day. Over 160 men are employed upon the site and the foundations for the factory are ready.

When the factory is complete, 600 men will be employed. A supply of 10,000 acres of beet on contract for three years is required and 5,000 acres have already been secured.

Licensees extension of hours - 1922

SEVERAL Soham licensees applied for an extension of hours from two o'clock to six o'clock each Monday because that day was market day in

Everybody's buying parachutes - 1928

WAR-TIME parachutes purchased from the Air Ministry are being sold at the business establishment of a well-known Cambridge alderman.

A friend of mine dropped in to purchase one and was interest to note the date and place of origin stamped on each.

The inscription in black lettering reads: "W. Holmes and Son Ltd, Orwell, Cambs". The date was November 28, 1918, just after the Armistice.

It is a curious coincidence that these parachutes, made for war purposes a few miles from Cambridge, had come back nine years later to be sold in a Cambridge emporium for the practical uses of motor car covers, dust-sheets, tents, and the like.

Soham. There was a petition signed by 74 persons who attended that market in favour of granting the extension. All these signatures were obtained in the market and all were persons from outside Soham.

There was no accommodation for people to obtain shelter. All that was wanted was accommodation and refreshment. The application was refused.

Don who dared to wear trousers - 1910

AN amusing story of how a Cambridge don achieved sartorial immortality has been forwarded to me by Mr G. White of Regent Street.

Dr Lowther-Yates, master of St Catharine's College at the close of the 1700s, enjoyed the distinction of being the first Cambridge don who dared to wear trousers in public.

When he walked as vice chancellor to the university, wearing trousers instead of the conventional knee-breeches, somebody shouted out of a window on King's Parade: "Gadzoons! Gadzoons! Lowther-Yates in pantaloons."

The mysterious word 'Gadzoons' was a favourite ejaculation of surprise that he used.

Coldham's Common golf course - 1933

SIR, Coldham's Common could be turned into a municipal nine-hole golf course now it is no longer required for shooting.

The corporation has £700 from the War Office in compensation for not putting the Common in the state it was before the rifle range was constructed. The various firing points and the lower portion of the butts could be used in the construction of a very sporting course, providing work for the unemployed.

It would be no new thing to have golf played on the Common as the first university course was there - RG.



Shooting at Coldham's Common